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Welcome

From the President
Dr Helen Moore



Many of the events described in this edition of the *Sundial* took place in what now seems a very different world, one in which none of us gave much, if any, thought to how fragile the things we enjoy on a daily basis – seminars, meals, the simple human interactions attendant on crossing the quad – would turn out to be. We have missed all those things over the past four months, but I hope that reading about them here will act as a sustaining reminder of how much we share, and as an expression of community, belonging and hopeful purpose in a time that for many has been unfamiliar and dislocating.

The disruptions of the pandemic notwithstanding, the academic activities of the College, our research, and strategic planning for the benefit of future generations of Corpuscles nonetheless all continue apace. So you will find here Prof Judith Olszowy-Schlanger's summary of her Lowe Lectures on our remarkable medieval Hebrew manuscripts, alongside news of the launch of our Corpus sustainability initiative. This collaborative venture between students, staff and Fellows has already led to the adoption of Passivhaus standards in the design for the Special Collections Centre, and the appointment of new waste contractors with a commitment to send zero waste to landfill.

Our teaching and research pivoted rapidly this Spring into new online modes, and although Corpus's buildings have experienced a rare period of emptiness as illustrated on pp. 8-9, our online world has been busy and vibrant, with thousands of hours of lectures, tutorials and meetings conducted over Teams and Zoom. Two interviews with Fellows, Liz Fisher and Heba Sailem, demonstrate just how intensively modern research is engaged with the world around us, whether through Liz's innovative analyses of the role of

law in public administration, or Heba's exploration of the medical advances facilitated by machine learning and visualisation that can interpret data in new and potentially life-changing ways.

We are delighted to showcase three recent novels by Corpus members in this edition – Struan Murray's debut book for children, *Orphans of the Tide*, and two thrillers by English alumnae Harriet Tyce and Lucy Atkins (with the appropriately enigmatic titles of *Blood Orange* and *Magpie Lane*). Both Struan, who is lecturer in Biochemistry, and Lucy have drawn inspiration from Oxford places and people, as they explain here; Harriet and Lucy, meanwhile, introduce us to the concept of 'pandemlit' and offer their thoughts on the perennial attractions, even 'comfort', of crime fiction, whilst advancing some suggestions as to why the genre is enjoying a resurgence under lockdown.

The summer is always a time for farewells, and in this issue we send our thanks and warm good wishes for a very happy retirement to Sarah Salter, known to many readers in her role as Head of Alumni Relations. In the ten years she has been at Corpus, Sarah has brought a distinctively warm and personal style to her interactions with old members, often staying in touch across many years and getting to know alumni and their families as personal friends. Conviviality has been the watchword of Sarah's time in this post, whether at golf matches, dinners or on cultural trips, and we wish her a fond and grateful farewell and a very happy 'retirement' as she turns to a whole new range of interests. For Sarah, as for our other leavers this year, Covid-19 has enforced the deferral of in-person events, but as soon as the restrictions are lifted we will begin planning a fitting send-off and celebration in 2021 for those leaving this year. Our thoughts all term have rested particularly with the 2020 Finalists, whose Oxford 'rite of passage' through Finals, Schools dinners, post-examination celebrations and punting trips was snatched from them in March by lockdown: their resilience, optimism, adaptability and generosity of spirit in coping with disappointment and disruption have been exemplary. I know you will join with us in wishing this class of 2020 the very best of health, happiness and success for the future, with our hope that the years they have spent at Corpus will sustain and enable them as they head out into the world.

Helen Moore

Sundial

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COVER: Corpus Christi Chapel's new Altar Frontal
Photograph: Judith Maltby

Profile

Professor Liz Fisher
Fellow and Tutor, Professor of Environmental Law

Professor Liz Fisher has been a fellow in law at Corpus since 2000. She was awarded the title of Professor of Environmental Law by the University in 2014.

Law is valued for its stability and the durability of its doctrines and rules. While it is expected that scientific understanding quickly evolves, there is an expectation that law and legal thinking endure. But what happens when new problems and new institutions emerge?

It is this question which is the Pole Star of Professor Liz Fisher's research. Working in the closely connected fields of environmental law and administrative law, her scholarship examines how law interrelates with environmental problems and public administration. Studying that interface makes clear the substantive role of law – how it frames our understanding of the world, how it stabilises relations in times of disruption, and how new problems and new institutions require the need for legal imagination.

Her 2007 award winning book, *Risk Regulation and Administrative Constitutionalism* examined legal disputes over risk in five different legal cultures showing such disputes were disputes over the legitimacy of public administration. She has also worked on charting emerging climate change case law and how courts have evolved judicial review of environmental modelling and other forms of scientific decision-making. Fisher's recent published work engages with law reform proposals including the proposals for a new Environment Act for England and reforms in the use of science by government agencies in the US.

In October 2020, Cambridge University Press is publishing *Administrative Competence: Reimagining Administrative Law* that she has co-written with Professor Sidney Shapiro of Wake Forest University (who has been a Visiting Scholar at the College in 2019-20).

In the book, which is the product of an eight-year intellectual collaboration, Fisher and Shapiro make an argument that US administrative law has never been what it should be – a law of public administration. This is because administrative lawyers have never explicitly related legal doctrine to public administration in a sustained way. The book opens up ideas of expert public administration, charts the history of US public administration and administrative law, and reimagines current administrative law doctrine. That act of reimagination is not wishful thinking but rather shows how by thinking of administrative law as the law of public administration much more sense can be made of current administrative law doctrine and legal disputes. The book ends with a daring argument for a new Administrative Procedure Act for the US – while perhaps not realistic, given the current politics of the US, it does underscore that administrative law can be a true law of public administration.

Fisher has just begun a new project as part of her wider interest in English administrative law. Working with Dr Joanna Bell (SEH, Law Faculty) she is charting the doctrinal landscape of English and Welsh administrative law. The two of them are reading and mapping a year's worth of Administrative Court case law and

comparing what they found to the anxieties concerning judicial review being too politicised and too incoherent. In a survey of over 600 judgments they are finding these anxieties not only unfounded, but also many legal issues that have been overlooked by scholars.

For Fisher though, scholarship is only part of the role of an academic. She is deeply committed to her teaching and is intensely proud of what her undergraduate and graduate students have gone on to do. She is also a firm believer in the teamwork that is required for vibrant intellectual communities to flourish. She feels immensely lucky to have had fabulous law colleagues during her time at Corpus, first Lucia Zedner and now Matt Dyson. She has served in a variety of administrative roles in the Faculty and College and is lead author on Fisher, Lange and Scotford, *Environmental Law: Text Cases and Materials* (2nd ed, OUP 2019) and has published *Environmental Law: A Very Short Introduction* (OUP 2017). She is General Editor of the *Journal of Environmental Law*, Review Articles Editor of the *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*, and a Delegate of OUP.

While her job and family don't leave her time for much else, as eagle-eyed readers of the *Pelican Record* know she is a keen hiker. She also makes her own clothes.



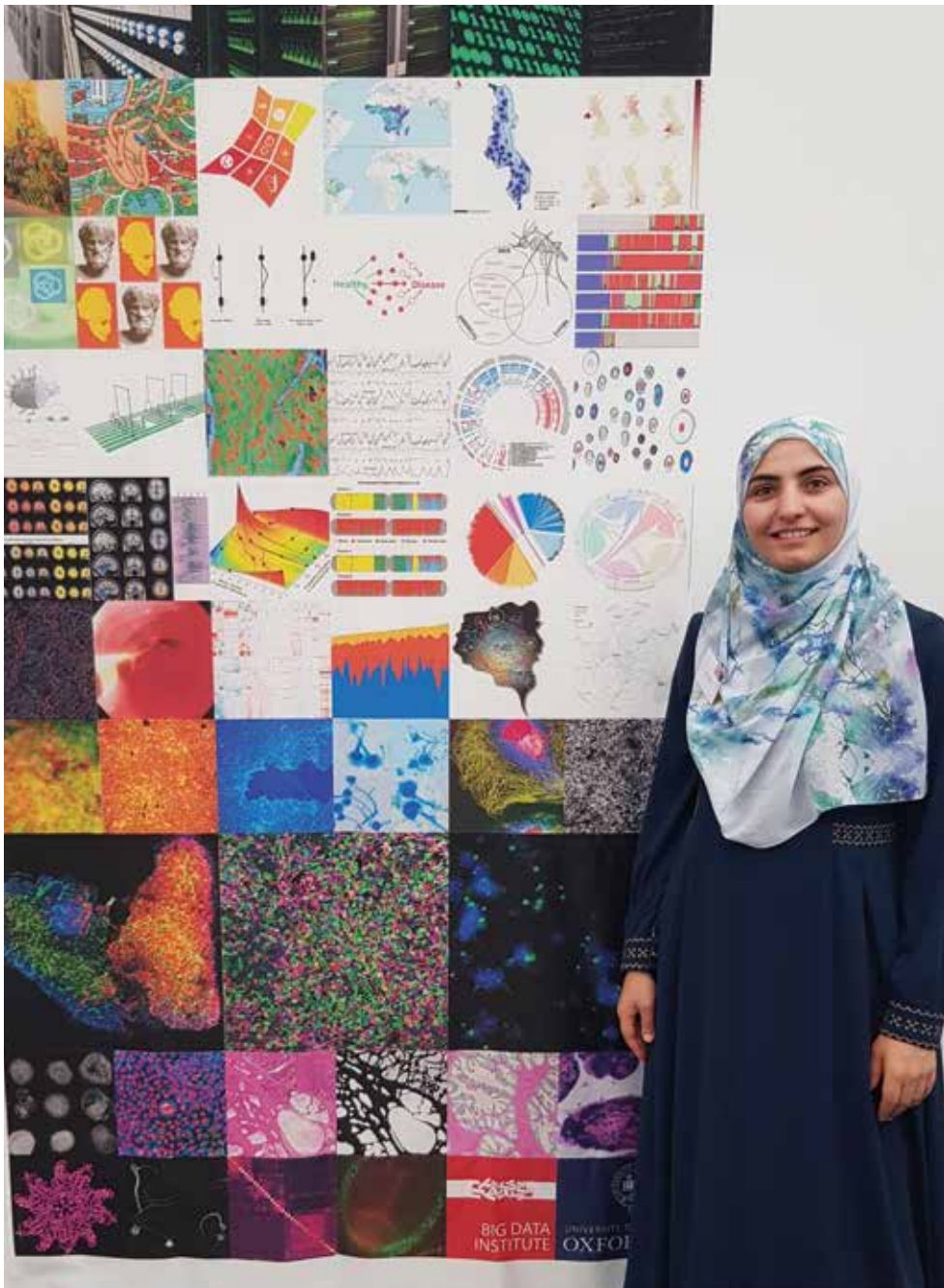
Research

Dr Heba Sailem
Research Fellow funded by the Wellcome Trust

PAINTING WITH BIG DATA

Every aspect of the world around us is a potential source of data – and now we can collect those data pretty much at will from the food we eat every day, the number of times we exercise, the things we buy, to how we feel. The rapid technological advances make it easier than ever to capture and store these data, any and all of which can and do provide insights into our own life and behaviours. Data on our lifestyle can be used in medical research: it allows us to answer questions such as how our daily activities, interactions with friends, and our environment affect our health. Businesses can also benefit: big data can provide a more personalised experience for customers and maximise organisations’ profits. For example, the web pages we browse can be tracked by the browser and used to predict which other products may interest us. The term big data describes the methods and infrastructure that permit the efficient analysis and mining of large-scale datasets.

Although there is a lot to learn from our own data, it is just a small portion of the information we have the potential to collect. Our body is composed of around



RIGHT: Engaging via art: Dr Sailem participated in the design of a scientific quilt to showcase the science at the Big Data Institute

OPPOSITE PAGE: Avatars of breast cancer cells using PhenoPlot



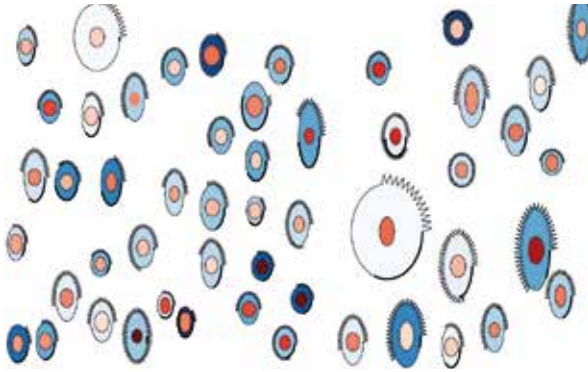
My research involves developing machine learning methods that mimic human ability in interpreting imaging but in a more systematic and objective manner

30 trillion cells and 200 cell types where almost every cell has the genetic code of 20 thousand genes. The DNA code is unique to every person and provides a template to create different proteins. The proteins made in every cell depend on the tissue and organ type. These cells adopt different shapes and forms to support their function. Using different experimental techniques, we can collect various datasets describing the cells’ genetic code and the level of expressed genes. Furthermore, we can observe the behaviour of individual cells under the microscope and the different proteins can be marked to understand what each does in the cells. These different data help us understand the biology underlying cell behaviour and, for example, how this behaviour changes as a result of disease.

It goes without saying that cancer is a disease which is dangerous to life because cells start to behave abnormally. They proliferate more, live longer, and on some occasions start invading the surrounding tissues. Cancer cells tend to dominate other cells in the tissue and impact their function. Cancer becomes deadly when cancer cells colonise other organs which make the tumour difficult to resect. Changes in cancer cell behaviour can be caused by mutations where mistakes in copying DNA results in altered protein functions. One way to understand what the gene is doing in the cell is by perturbing its activity in vitro. For example, we can use methods like CRISPR to suppress the expression of a gene and identify how this can affect cell functions. We can think of proteins as the ingredients of the cells and their physical and chemical interactions give rise to the cell form and functions. An analogy is to take ingredients off a cake recipe one by one to understand each ingredient’s role in the cake.

Perturbing every single one of the 20,000 genes in a sample of cells may sound a lot but these experiments are now done on a routine basis. Using robotic microscopy, we can image thousands of isogenic cells after these perturbations. The resulting data provides powerful means of identifying which gene is contributing to carcinogenesis. My research involves developing machine learning methods that mimic human ability in interpreting this imaging but in a more systematic and objective manner. This includes identifying cells and specific features such as length, area, number of neighbouring cells, or the abundance of certain markers. These features can allow the observer to draw inferences about what genes are doing, based on the effect of their perturbations.

Interpreting large imaging data remains a big hurdle and limits what we can learn from large perturbation data. This is the challenge I set out to tackle for my Sir Henry Wellcome Fellowship. I developed KCML, an intelligent system that combines prior knowledge on genes and machine learning to discover new gene functions. Surprisingly, using KCML, I found that smell-sensing genes might play a role in the spread of colon cancer. We have four hundred smell-sensing genes in our nose, allowing us to identify a wide range of scents. These genes can also be activated in other tissues – including the colon – but not much is known about their function in these tissues. My work revealed that perturbing many



smell-sensing genes results in abnormal organisation of colon cells and associates with known colon cancer genes. I was able to validate that the expression of these genes in colon cancer patients correlates with worse outcome. KCML can be applied to different datasets to advance our knowledge of gene functions and identify potential disease biomarkers.

Owing to the complexity of biological systems, one dataset would never provide all the clues. The abundance of big data means that we can increasingly investigate multiple datasets in order to try to explain a specific observation. For me, different types of data are like different colours: I use them to paint a story of cellular behaviour. Like art, data science requires a lot of creativity. Not far from art, I devised PhenoPlot, a first-of-its-kind visualisation method that allows drawing avatars based on measurements extracted from thousands of cancer cells in order to facilitate the understanding of microscopy data and to tell stories explaining their behaviour.

Although genetic changes are believed to be the main factor leading to cancer, they are not the only factor. Cancer can also develop due to changes in the microenvironment of cells, for example how cells are connected and who their neighbours are. During my PhD at the Institute of Cancer Research, I discovered that the shape of the breast cells and their surrounding in culture dishes can have a significant impact on the activity of an oncogenic gene that can turn other genes on or off. For example, when cells are surrounded by many other cells they will have a different response to drugs than when they are spread far away. This work demonstrates the importance of studying the genetic code along with the architecture and form of cells and tissues.

To understand the impact of cell context on its behaviour, I am now working on tissue imaging data from colorectal cancer patient biopsies and resections. Imaging is like a crystal ball that we try to see through to the past and future of cancer cells. I combine methods from computer vision, statistics, and bioinformatics guided by biological knowledge to characterise how the cell surrounding and the interaction between different cell types in the tissue lead to cancer initiation. On the one hand, this can help identify potential targets for patient treatment and on the other hand, it can assist doctors in diagnosing patients. I still do not know what my next painting will look like, but I hope it will bring a brighter future to cancer patients.

College Faces

Dr Struan Murray
Lecturer in Biochemistry

TIMELESS TIDES

Struan Murray’s debut children’s fantasy novel has received critical acclaim. He told us about the inspiration for *Orphans of the Tide*.



► A lot of the self-discipline and self-motivation needed to write a novel I’d already learned in research. I think the ability to communicate ideas effectively through narrative is arguably the most essential part of academia.

Is there something particular about the magical qualities of Oxford that lends itself to the writing of children’s literature?

I think that because of the University, Oxford does have a certain timeless feel to it, and there is something transporting about a place where time stands still which really allows the imagination to expand. Oxford is also a place where some of the most interesting and creative people in the world have come to study. I have lived here for fifteen years now, first as a student now as a full-time researcher, and I’ve been fortunate to meet so many inspirational people; they have taught me a huge amount about writing.

What books from your own childhood do you look back on with pleasure?

I was a huge fan of comic books initially, mainly *Tintin* and *Calvin and Hobbes*. Of course, I grew up reading Roald Dahl: I especially loved *Dirty Beasts* for the blend of cynicism and humour. When I was a little older I read *Northern Lights* and that was so different from anything else I’d read, it changed how I saw storytelling.

Are there any elements in your book that draw on your Corpus experience?

There are actually. The main narrative of the story is interspersed with diary entries from a scholar at the University. His story mirrors that of the novel’s protagonist, Ellie, and his research may hold the key she needs to destroy the Enemy. He is also struggling to keep a big secret hidden from his colleagues, which was inspired a little by the ‘imposter syndrome’ with which so many academics struggle. Also, he’s been battling to get a manuscript finished for a very long time.

Where do you see your future – biochemistry or writing?

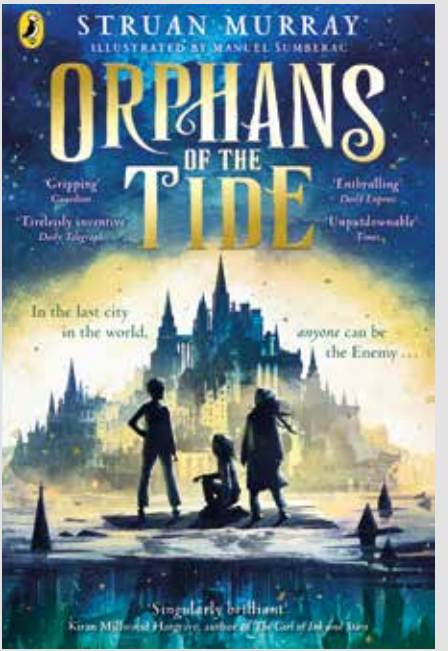
Both, I hope! Neither is certain because they are both dependent on continued publication success, but ideally I would like to be able to keep writing and researching if possible. I find each poses a distinct challenge, each demands a different kind of thinking, and yet they also complement one another. A lot of the self-discipline and self-motivation needed to write a novel I’d already learned in research; I think the ability to communicate ideas effectively through narrative is arguably the most essential part of academia.

Are there any plans for a follow-up to this book?

Yes! The sequel is due to be released in March 2021, and will take the principal characters from the first book to a strange and dangerous new setting. I also have a few other weird and unrefined ideas that I’m chiselling away at when I get the chance.

Book

The City was built on a sharp mountain that jutted improbably from the sea, and the sea kept trying to claim it back. That grey morning, once the tide had retreated, a whale was found on a rooftop.



When a mysterious boy washes in with the tide, the citizens believe he’s the Enemy – the god who drowned the world – come again to cause untold chaos. Only Ellie, a fearless young inventor living in a workshop crammed with curiosities, believes he’s innocent. But the Enemy can take possession of any human body and the ruthless Inquisition are determined to destroy it forever. To save the boy, Ellie must prove who he really is – even if that means revealing her own dangerous secret...

Reviews

The *Times* and *Sunday Times* Children’s Book of the Week.

‘Gripping’ *Guardian*

‘There is a touch of Phillip Pullman about the world that Murray creates, and Murray matches Pullman’s lyrical prose in his descriptions of The City’s sea-soaked skylines and the tools that Ellie wields as she attempts to set The City’s imbalances to right. The City is singular in its character, while the characters themselves [...] anchor *Orphans of the Tide* in an urgent, human reality.’ *Irish Times*

Sarah Salter
Head of Alumni Relations

Host with the most



I first encountered Corpus at an Oxford University Reunion drinks party in New York in 2009. I was working for Hertford College at the time and met both Tim Lankester (then President of Corpus) and Nick Thorn. Later that year, a job came up in the Corpus Development Office and thinking about applying, I decided to take a look around. I was very struck by the beauty of the buildings, but also by the same warm welcome that I had experienced in New York. But what clinched it was the view from the Handa Terrace. I realised that I had to apply or I would probably regret it for the rest of my life.

I started in February 2010 and was soon receiving emails from Old Members, whom I had yet to meet, enthusiastically welcoming me aboard. My first alumni event was the Hardie golf tournament, held at Huntercombe, near Henley. I knew very little about golf and spent most of the day taking photos of our intrepid Corpus golfers and wondering nervously if I would ever be able to find the clubhouse again. Nevertheless, these Pelican Golf Society members who, at that point, had been friends for nearly forty years, generously welcomed me into their Corpus world, something I have appreciated ever since.

At the start, there was just Nick and me in a small office, attending every event and coping with everything from an unexpected shortage of bedrooms for a Gaudy (we donned Marigolds and made up 20 beds!) to discussing chair design for a fundraising scheme for the Hall renovations. With a previous career administrating fine art tours, I soon found myself organising the College’s attendance at the University Reunions abroad and met Corpuscles across the globe. And there was always such a warm welcome. I especially remember being invited by longstanding Corpus friends to join a terrific brunch the morning after a College dinner in New York and very convivial alumni dinners in Paris, Rome and Vienna. As well as the traditional College events such as the Eights Week Lunches, the Carol Services and of course the Varsity rugby matches, I much enjoyed devising extra events to add to the calendar, such as theatre trips to see Blanche McIntyre’s productions at Stratford and at the Globe. Hunting Bishop Fox in Durham also remains a highlight. However, the Gaudies were always the focus of the year and it is hard to exaggerate the satisfaction of seeing the pleasure and nostalgia that these events always generated.

2017 was of course an extraordinary year for the College – and for me. With the help of newly-recruited Ben Armstrong, we arranged over 50 events from reunions in Hong Kong and Singapore and seminars in Corpus to a magnificent Tudor Ball and a recital in the Sheldonian by renowned tenor, Ian Bostridge. I felt enormously honoured to be involved in the College’s 500th celebrations and also felt very lucky to be back for them. Large parts of 2015 and 2016 had been marred for me by illness but once again, I experienced the characteristic kindness of the alumni and the generous support of my colleagues for which I remain extremely grateful.

I am already missing the daily contact with the alumni and also the varied conversations over SCR lunches. Behind every College event, there is of course a network of College staff whose hard work ensured the success of our endeavours and I shall miss them too. Covid-19 meant that all College events were cancelled from 16 March and I was sent to work from home on 24 March so there was no opportunity to say goodbye to anybody in person. However, I look forward to reappearing occasionally, once we reach the new normal. Meanwhile, my retirement plans of travelling, learning the cello and expanding my knowledge of art history have been somewhat curtailed, but at least I am getting to grips with the garden.

I have been told that I will be included in invitations to future College events, so it’s *au revoir* Corpus friends!

The *quiet* Picture

All by ourselves
The College in Covid-19 lockdown

It was Corpuscle, Sir Henry Newbolt, who penned the famous line “There’s a deathly hush in the close tonight.” Sir Henry might have been describing the strange noiselessness that has marked Trinity term at Corpus since the beginning of the Covid-19 lockdown. In the absence of fretting finalists and gregarious gardeners, with the exception of the lone duty porter, Fox the Tortoise and our indefatigable perennial visitors, Mr and Mrs Mallard, have had the place entirely to themselves.



Sustainability

Green college

Rather typically of Corpus, over the past year there has been a lot of quiet but determined activity to respond to the Climate Emergency and put Corpus on a less carbon intensive path in future years.

The seriousness of the changes to our climate and ecosystems and the exponential acceleration of impacts has been a call to arms for the College. Most importantly, this has been a collaborative enterprise where Junior Members, Fellows and staff have all had a role to play. In particular, Junior Members have made a critical contribution and injected a sense of rational urgency into proceedings. The College thanks all of those involved for this.

So, what have we been doing? The first phase of this project was to examine the Endowment, upon which the College relies so heavily to fulfil its charitable purpose, and to devise a policy that will move it gradually towards a much more sustainable basis in the future. In Trinity 2019, Governing Body adopted an Endowment Sustainability Policy which took a number of important steps.

Firstly, we have committed to the United Nations six Principles of Responsible Investing ('PRI'). Whilst we are not going to affiliate with the UN on this for cost reasons, we want to replicate these principles in the way we manage the Endowment going forward.

Secondly, we have committed to moving the Endowment's more liquid investments towards strategies which are PRI compliant and in the case of all index investments we will invest only in 'best in class' ESG (Environment, Social & Governance) compliant funds. We have been working with Cambridge Colleges and our passive investment manager, Amundi SA, to devise a strategy which achieves full divestment from carbon intensive industries, reduces carbon emissions by 40% and doubles 'green revenues'. We hope that this fund will be up and running in 2020 and that it will become a core pillar for our Endowment. We have prohibited investment in munitions and other industries that do not align with our charitable purpose and mission: pornography, tobacco and the extraction of thermal coal or tar sands.

Finally, we have committed to engage with the farmers and tenants on our landed estates to promote greater sustainability and biodiversity. Whilst it will take some time to shift the portfolio fully in this direction, these goals are expansive and go beyond the box ticking and 'greenwashing' so often seen in the corporate and investment world.

The second phase has been to look at the College site, our wider buildings and 'operations' to formulate a sustainability policy which will gradually reduce our carbon footprint and focus our minds on being more sustainable in every aspect of College life.

The President set up a Sustainability Working Group in Michaelmas 2019, which consisted of Fellows, the Domestic Bursar, the Bursar and representatives from the MCR and the JCR. Lots of ideas were suggested with an emphasis on taking targeted action in areas where we can get immediate results. It was remarkable that in the end the policy was written by the Junior Members (with occasional edits from the SCR!) but essentially this piece of work is something which has been created by the student body and in particular Freya Chambers who deserves the lion's share of the applause for shepherding this landmark policy.

Two things have quickly emerged from our new policy, adopted in Hilary 2020: we have immediately changed our refuse collection contract, and despite a slight increase in cost now have comprehensive

recycling and importantly the ability to track our waste. The Domestic Bursar has been able to source waste bins which conform with our listed buildings but allow casual waste streams to be properly segregated at source. We will now be able to create a baseline for waste and set targets for its reduction. Most importantly, our new contractor sends zero waste to landfill.

We have also decided to investigate building the new Special Collections Centre to Passivhaus standards. Passivhaus is the gold standard for sustainability and is significantly more rigorous than current government standards. While the University also has Passivhaus aspirations, in fact at this point no significant building in Oxford and certainly not one connected to a 16th century Grade I listed structure has achieved Passivhaus standards, so this would be truly ground breaking if we are able to do it. The additional cost is estimated at £500,000, or 5% of the build cost, but we believe the savings over the life of the building occasioned by the minimal requirement for active heating or cooling will at least partially offset the initial outlay (see chart below).

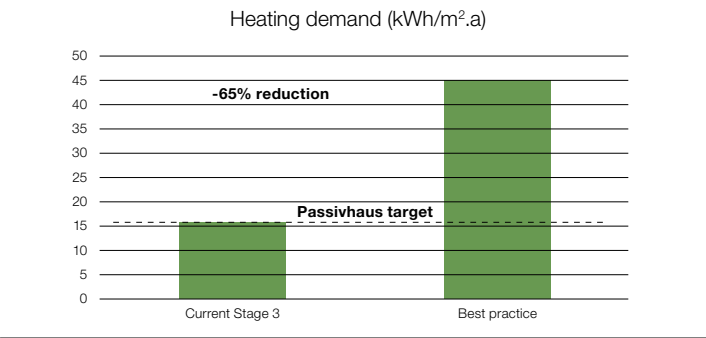
We expect this building to achieve a 53% reduction in CO₂ emissions compared to current best practice construction which is, I think, a remarkable statistic. We also expect the building to benefit from much tighter building controls throughout its construction: this will lead to fewer problems in the future, as buildings often suffer from mistakes made during construction which only come to light years afterwards. Passivhaus requires ongoing inspection and certification throughout construction which will, we hope, mean that we get this right first time with consequent longer term cost benefits.

In conclusion, this is very much the beginning of our sustainability journey. What has been gratifying has been the shared sense of commitment and purpose across all the College constituencies. Sustainability has often been divisive elsewhere but in our case it has been a process where all have felt able to contribute views and to feel that they have had a role in shaping College policy. The result has been a series of important and meaningful decisions which will reduce the College's impact on the environment in future years and permit us to achieve our charitable purpose in a much more sustainable manner.

Nicholas Melhuish, Estates Bursar

Heating Demand

The stage 3 Passivhaus design achieves a **65% reduction** in annual heating energy use compared to the best practice design.



Key facts



Replacing electrical sub mains has substantially reduced power loss across the College's wiring system



Passivhaus design achieves **65%** reduction in annual heating energy



Our new waste contractors send **0** waste to landfill

Film Première

In pursuit of the Fox

Johnny Lyons, Director of *Discovering Isaiah Berlin*, writes about his film in which Henry Hardy (PPP, 1967) tells the fascinating story of how he became Isaiah Berlin's editor. The film premièred at Corpus earlier this year.

At the start of 2017 I began to write a book which I should have written twenty years before. By October of that year I felt brave or foolhardy enough to email the preface of my book to Henry Hardy, a Fellow of Wolfson College, Oxford and editor of the works of Isaiah Berlin (1909-97) – both Hardy and Berlin were undergraduates at Corpus Christi. To my amazement, Hardy responded to my email immediately, asking that I send him the rest of my typescript. And so began an unexpected friendship that reached one of its high points in Oxford earlier this year.

On the evening of 17 January, Corpus Christi held the première of my film *Discovering Isaiah Berlin* which tells the story of how Hardy became Berlin's tireless editor and loyal friend. Their partnership, which was not without its mutual tensions and frustrations, began in the 1970s and, in a way, carries on to this day, more than twenty years after Berlin's death. Luckily for us it has produced over twenty meticulously edited volumes, including four weighty tomes of letters. It is no exaggeration to say that in Hardy, Berlin found his very own Boswell.

The première, which was preceded by a drinks reception generously hosted by the President, was virtually a full house in the College's splendid auditorium. A lively panel discussion took place after the film during which Robert Cottrell, co-creator of the annual Isaiah Berlin Day in Riga, probed Hardy, Richard Lindley, a political philosopher and former student at Wolfson College (of which Berlin was founding President), and myself about Berlin's life,

ABOVE: Isaiah Berlin as an undergraduate. BELOW: 1927 telegram congratulating Isaiah Berlin on his Corpus scholarship.



thought and legacy. The panel eventually gave way to questions and comments from the audience which brought the event's formal proceedings to an appropriately inclusive and interactive conclusion.

The main event coincided with the launch of my book, *The Philosophy of Isaiah Berlin* as well as the publication of the paperback edition of Hardy's critically acclaimed *In Search of Isaiah Berlin: A Literary Adventure*. Hardy added an appendix to the new edition which includes a posthumous letter to Berlin; he had originally written it in 2004 after completing the first volume of Berlin's letters, *Flourishing*.

I should like to end by quoting the final paragraph of Hardy's note to Berlin's shade: "We do miss you, Isaiah. It's been more than six years, after all. But working on your letters is a marvellous analgesic: it enables me to spend much of each day in your company, so vividly do the letters bring you to life. Your Russian-Jewish-British light-hearted seriousness, intelligence and wisdom are models to us all. The other day I was rung by Angela Huth, who is editing a book of eulogies, including yours of Maurice Bowra. She has been asked, somewhat absurdly, to describe each of the contributors in not more than three words, for the book's contents page, and wanted to know what to say about you. The best I could come up with was 'historian of ideas' – dull enough, but at least, I hope, not misleading. This set me thinking what I should say to you now if I too were allowed only three words. The answer flashed into my mind straightaway: *Thanks for writing.*"

The Corpus 12 Papers

In February, Professor Olszowy-Schlanger delivered the E A Lowe Lectures in Palaeography 2020. Her subject was the Hebrew-Latin Manuscripts of the Library of Corpus Christi College.

A BILINGUAL HEBREW-LATIN TREASURE

Professor Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, Fellow of Corpus Christi College and President of the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies

In a letter written on 5 July 1519, the famous humanist scholar Erasmus of Rotterdam (c. 1467-1536) praised Bishop Richard Fox and his newly founded College for its daring Humanistic curriculum. The College was hailed as a trailblazer on the path towards the knowledge of the three ancient languages of classical wisdom: Latin, of course, but also Greek and Hebrew. At the heart of this project, asserted Erasmus, was the College library and its ‘trilingual’ collections:

“No act of his has ever proved this more clearly than his consecrating the magnificent college which he [Richard Fox] has set up at his own expense expressly to three chief languages, to humane literature, and to ancient authors. What greater service could he have rendered to his fellow men, what monument could more rightly recommend his name to the undying memory of mankind? (...) I foresee that in days to come this college, like some most holy temple shrine dedicated to all that is best in literature, will be reckoned all over the world to be one of the chief glories of Britain and that even more men will be drawn to Oxford by the *spectaculum* of this trilingual library where no good author is lacking and no bad one finds a place, as Rome in olden days attracted many by the prospect of so many marvels.”

This letter was addressed by Erasmus to the first President of the College, John Claymond, (1468-1536), whose own remarkable collection of books was to become the cornerstone of Corpus’ trilingual library. Richard Fox was himself interested in Hebrew, and the large library he bequeathed to his College in 1528 included one Hebrew book, a grammar *De Rudimentis Hebraicis* by a pioneering German Hebraist Johannes Reuchlin, printed at Phorzheim in 1506 (and today kept under shelfmark Delt.1.6). However, it was Claymond’s gift which in 1536 provided Corpus library with what was then one of the richest and most unusual collections of Hebrew books in England.

It has been my privilege and pleasure to present and to discuss these manuscripts as part of the A. E. Lowe lecture series in palaeography, in February 2020.

John Claymond’s gift included a group of thirteenth-century manuscripts (catalogued as CCC 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11), all of which contain, in conformity with the donor’s wishes, an inscription calling for a prayer for his soul (Fig. 1). These manuscripts had belonged in the thirteenth century to Christian scholars who undertook to study the Hebrew Bible in its original

language, including its commentaries by Jewish authors. All these volumes contain different portions of the Bible, except for MS CCC 6 which is an early thirteenth-century copy of a commentary on the Prophets and Hagiographa by Rabbi Solomon son of Isaac (known as Rashi), the eminent eleventh-century scholar from Troyes in Champagne. Claymond’s gift includes some manuscripts written by Jewish scribes for Jewish readers – manuscripts which, some time after their production, came into the possession of Christian scholars, such as Rashi’s commentary in MS CCC 6 and a copy of the Earlier Prophets (the books of Josue, Judges, Samuel and Kings) in MS CCC 7. The other manuscripts contain portions of the Bible: MS CCC 5, a Pentateuch; CCC 8, the Former Prophets; CCC 9, Samuel and Chronicles; and two Psalters CCC 10 and CCC 11. It is clear these were ‘tailor-made’ for the needs of Christian readers: they are bilingual books in which the Hebrew text and its corresponding Latin translations were copied in facing columns on the same page. This layout helped Christian scholars to gain proficiency in Hebrew, by comparison with their familiar Latin versions. Indeed, these bilingual learning tools had been used by a range of medieval scholars, as attested by the profusion of notes they had scribbled in their margins. Thus, thanks to these annotations (not recommended today!) these exceptional books enable us to reconstruct the thoughts and learning practices of these thirteenth-century readers, and indeed to appreciate their understanding of the Hebrew text. That said, it should be noted that no explicit information is to be found as to who precisely were the scholars who produced and studied them. No date or place of copy is mentioned in any of the manuscripts, nor do they display any medieval library pressmarks: all that can be gathered from the palaeographical study of their Latin and Hebrew scripts is that they were written in England, in the thirteenth century.

We will focus our attention here on the earliest and possibly most intriguing of these manuscripts, MS CCC 10: a medium size book (33.5 x 25 cm) composed of 83 parchment leaves, bound in a simple but elegant seventeenth-century English binding of mid-brown blind-tooled calfskin on boards. Written like any Latin book from left to right, CCC 10 holds no direct indications as to the identity of its makers and early readers, but it contains a host of invaluable insights concerning Hebrew learning in the Middle Ages. The style of its Latin and Hebrew scripts suggests that it was written in the first half of the thirteenth century in England. Its English origins are further confirmed by a brief note on a blank leaf at the beginning of the volume, which



LEFT: Fig. 1 CCC MS 10, fol.2r
MIDDLE: Fig. 2 CCC MS 10, fol.18v
ABOVE: Fig. 3 CCC MS 10, fol.8v

explains that the Latin word *alvearium* can be translated as ‘a be hyfe’, that is ‘a beehive’ in medieval English.

The volume contains a bilingual Psalter in three parallel columns: Hebrew and two versions of Jerome’s translation of the Psalms. Jerome’s Gallican Psalter is placed on the left of every page, his Hebraica (a version of the Psalter which Jerome translated directly from Hebrew) in the middle and the Hebrew column to the right, each column written in a specially planned space marked by the architecture of the ruled lines. The Gallican and the Hebraica were written first and the Hebrew column was adjusted so that its verses correspond to their Latin translations. This was not an easy task. Hebrew texts are usually shorter than their Latin equivalents almost by half, because fewer characters are written down. In effect, only the consonants are written on the line in Hebrew, while the vowels are marked as a system of dots and lines below and above the consonants – as in the classical Tiberian vocalization tradition, followed by our manuscript. Moreover, preposition and possessive and object particles in Hebrew are directly attached to the words, without a space. The Hebrew scribe had therefore too much space available for his text. However, to make sure that the reader could match Latin and Hebrew verses, small circles were added between the columns to mark the end of the verses (Fig. 2). More importantly, the Hebrew scribe laid out the text in his column in a chessboard pattern, where the blocks of text are written above blank spaces in alternating lines. While the scribe was a competent calligrapher, he did not always plan sufficiently well ahead this complicated text arrangement, and the final effect is not always successful. However, the organization of the writing space in an alternating chessboard pattern indicates the scribe’s familiarity with the layout models of Hebrew manuscripts. In the Bible, in effect, while the prose passages are usually written in regular blocks, the poetic texts follow their own page layout pattern, which has been compared in the Babylonian

Talmud (Megillah 16b) to a bricklaying technique “a half brick upon a brick and a brick upon a half brick”.

This manifest familiarity with Jewish patterns for poetic texts leads us to question the identity of the scribe of the Hebrew column. His handwriting is well trained, using a typical Gothic style of square calligraphic script prevalent in contemporary Hebrew manuscripts. The palaeographical features suggest that the scribe was himself a Jew, or at least that he had received a Jewish scribal education in his youth. He had also an excellent knowledge of the intricate art of Hebrew vocalisation. Was this highly trained specialist in production of Hebrew Bibles a Jewish scholar who assisted a group of monks in their endeavour to learn Hebrew, or was he a convert to Christianity? The latter possibility is certainly plausible: the growing hostility of their surroundings, crushing taxation and persecutions led many Jews to conversion in the 1240s and again in the 1260s. Nevertheless, so far as the Hebrew scribe of MS CCC 10 is concerned, some of his textual practices suggest that he remained an observant Jew. This is notably indicated by his treatment of the tetragrammaton, the four letters of the divine name. When a text containing the holy Name of God was written by mistake and had to be corrected, the scribe would cross over or erase the phrase but leave the name of God intact, adding a series of dots below the line to signal the error – as was the case at the beginning of Psalm 3 (Fig. 3). This respectful treatment of the tetragrammaton suggests that our scribe remained a pious Jew. That said, he clearly worked in close collaboration with Christian scribes. For example, he left a blank space for the initial words of the Hebrew verses, probably because they were due to be painted by a Christian illuminator, as in the alternating red and blue initials of the Latin columns. Likewise, the Hebrew scribe was working in close proximity with the Christian scribes, and no doubt in the same atelier. A confirmation of this is found in Psalm 2, where, in the middle of writing verse 6, our scribe for some reason passed the quill to a Christian apprentice, whose handwriting

New Arrivals

Marion Durand
Tutorial Fellow and Associate
Professor of Ancient Philosophy



In Michaelmas 2019, the College welcomed Marion Durand, who joined as Tutorial Fellow in Ancient Philosophy. She is also Associate Professor in the Faculty of Philosophy and Associate Lecturer at St John's College. She came from the University of Toronto, where she spent seven years, first as a doctoral student and then as a lecturer in the Department of Classics and the Collaborative Program in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy. She had previously studied Classics as an undergraduate at Cambridge, and she was glad to return to England and to the collegiate setting: "as an ancient philosopher, my work is by nature interdisciplinary and I am delighted to be joining a college which fosters such a sense of community and so values intellectual diversity. Of course, Corpus is a particularly wonderful place to be an ancient philosopher, with vibrant and active research and teaching communities in both Philosophy and Classics – and a superbly well stocked library."

Marion's research is in Stoic philosophy of language with forays into ancient logic and grammar as well as contemporary philosophy of language. Her recent work explores the semantics of Stoic propositions and attempts to understand the place of language in the Stoic philosophical system, including its relationship to metaphysics and the role it plays in Stoic epistemology. She is currently working towards a monograph which will provide an account of the Stoic theory based in part on new evidence which she has uncovered in ancient grammatical texts.

Marion teaches across the joint schools for both Corpus and St John's on topics ranging from ancient philosophy to introductory logic and philosophy of language. She is enjoying collaborating in Philosophy teaching with Mark Wrathall, as well as with Constanze Güthenke and the Classics teaching team, continuing Corpus' strong tradition in teaching all aspects of the ancient world.

“As an ancient philosopher, my work is by nature interdisciplinary and I am delighted to be joining a college which fosters such a sense of community and so values intellectual diversity”

Corpus Papers

shows a total absence of practice, wrong way of tracing the letters and such a lack of Hebrew that he even did not know where to place the boundaries of individual words. We will never know why this untrained novice was allowed to copy these six lines, but our scribe could not have been satisfied with the result, and he hastened to recover the quill from the top of the verso (Fig. 1). Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the production of this manuscript (CCC 10) involved a close collaboration between a Jewish scribe and Christian bookmakers.

In addition to its three versions in parallel columns, the Hebrew text of manuscript CCC 10 is provided with a complete Latin translation written as a superscriptio – between the lines of Hebrew. With some variants, the same approach is attested in three other bilingual manuscripts from thirteenth-century England. This superscription differs from Jerome's versions, and rather follows the Hebrew text to the letter. Indeed, its anonymous Christian author, tentatively identified with Robert Grosseteste (c. 1175-1253), displayed a remarkable knowledge of Hebrew and often relied on Jewish interpretations in his Latin translation.

The production and study of this and other bilingual Hebrew-Latin manuscripts has been associated by modern scholarship with Robert Grosseteste, with the Franciscan Friars of Oxford or with the Benedictine monks of the East Anglian monastery of Ramsey. These associations are still inconclusive, such that new in-depth studies of this corpus of manuscripts will be needed in order to better grasp, if not to definitively solve, some aspects of the mystery. Nevertheless, MS CCC 10 is a monument to the unprecedented fascination of medieval Christian scholars with the Hebrew Bible and with Jewish learning. This fascination

clearly transpires in a unique and anonymous preface, placed at the opening of our Psalter (Fig. 4):

“In order to quell the confrontation and conflict in their mother's womb, it may be useful to bring the peoples together into the unity of faith under the leadership of Christ, by reconciling their opposition through the knowledge of different tongues and different scripts, and to put them side by side, lest, because they disagree, they should always fight”.

LEFT: Fig. 4 CCC MS 10, fol.1v



Fundraising

Benefaction

New threads

College Chaplain Judith Maltby opens this account of the wonderful story behind our new altar frontal.

"In preparation for the Quincentenary celebrations, our Grade I listed Chapel had an extensive refurbishment which attended to much-needed work on its fabric. As part of the 2017 'At Home' events at Corpus, I gave a tour of the restored Chapel during which I mentioned (quite innocently!) that the 1960s, much patched, altar frontal was looking a bit sad now that the Chapel was looking so well. Elizabeth and Howard Nichols (Physics, 1961) came up to me later and offered a generous benefaction for a new frontal to be commissioned in thanksgiving for the College's 500th and their 50th wedding anniversaries. I knew just where to go: to Suellen Pedley and her Oxfordshire-based team. We supplied her with over a hundred images of pelicans and she made several on-site visits to ensure that not only the design but the fabrics themselves were sympathetic to the space and its lighting. Perhaps the shortest-lived committee in the College's history, the 'Frontal Committee' was delighted with her sympathetic design, as were Howard and Elizabeth. Though Covid has delayed the completion of the work, when it is safe to do so we will certainly have a joyful service to bless and commission the new frontal."

Suellen Pedley, Director of the Cathedral Embroidery Centre at Christ Church, who did the design work for the frontal takes up the story. "The work was carried out at our other workshop, All Saints Embroidery at St Mary's Convent in Wantage. The design for the Chapel frontal at Corpus Christi began with the Pelican which appears on the arms of the College and is such a prominent feature of the place, especially in the Quad. The Pelican is of course symbolic of the Eucharist, so it

is entirely fitting that it should be at the very centre of the new frontal. The two side panel shapes are taken from the finial end of the Arts and Crafts altar crucifix, while the surround of the entire frontal is based on the Chapel's wood panelling. Because the frontal is for use in all seasons of the Church year, the Pelican and the side panels are designed with open backgrounds so that they can receive colour insets indicating the passage of the Liturgical year.

"The embroidery of the Pelican itself was done by Kath Griffiths and took her over four hundred hours to work. During this time the Pelican began to be affectionately referred to as 'Blossom'. The two side panels were worked by Helen Saunders-Gill, and she and Kath combined to make up and complete the frontal. The aim was for it to be in place by Easter and although only a few more hours are needed for completion, the project has unfortunately been overtaken by events. The shutdown means that to our great frustration, access to the workshop will not be possible for the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, when the work is at last completed it will be placed in the Chapel as a focus of worship for many years to come."

Elizabeth and Howard Nichols' response to the photograph of 'Blossom' was, "Wow! We met the group early on, and when we visited them at work we admired the care and skill taken in the choice of threads and in how their orientation affected and highlighted the appearance and sheen of 'Blossom'. The execution of the design is beyond our expectation. A chance remark has resulted in the creation of such beauty! We look forward to seeing the completed frontal in situ. Our very grateful thanks to all for the magnificent achievement."

BELOW: Initial designs for the new altar frontal



Studentships

Funding for graduates

Corpus has, in recent years, sought to address the diminishing level of financial support that is available for graduate students – particularly in the Humanities – by fundraising for studentships. Thanks to the generosity of our Old Members a number of these are now in place.

The Mark Whittow Memorial Scholarship was funded in memory of our much-missed Fellow in Byzantine Studies, who died in December 2017. For Daniel Alford (DPhil, History) the award carries a particular poignancy. "Mark mentored me throughout my undergraduate career, his passion for Byzantine history being what motivated me to enter the field." Daniel's work explores the ways in which the Sasanian Empire (224-651 AD) influenced the family practices of Armenia. Such study serves to shine light on arguably the most vital region for Roman security and the still largely enigmatic empire that lay behind it.

The Cowley Scholarships in the Humanities were established by Cris Conde and Kamaryn Tanner in honour of former President, Sir Steve Cowley. Andreas Vassiliou (DPhil, Law) says that he would not have been able to embark on his studies without the scholarship. His research focuses on legal rules and how rules affect our normative practical reason. Andreas's goal is to provide a framework of the legal reasoning that judges should undertake when interpreting and applying the law. Llewelyn Hopwood (DPhil, English) is looking at the place of sound and auditory perception in medieval Wales. The idea fits into the burgeoning field of medieval sound studies, springing from the notion that the senses do not transcend time and place.

The Wolf Studentship in Economics was established by Jonathan Wolf in honour of his father, the well-known journalist and commentator on economics, Martin Wolf. The current holder of the studentship, Josh De Lyon (DPhil, Economics) is studying the effect of globalisation on worker outcomes such as wages and occupation characteristics.

Listing

► Did you know that we regularly send out College news and invitations to events by email? Please be sure to let us have your current email address if you want to keep in touch.

The allure of the modern thriller

Alumnae Lucy Atkins (English, 1987) and Harriet Tyce (English, 1991) are both successful authors. *Blood Orange* is Harriet's debut novel. Lucy's latest thriller *Magpie Lane*, was inspired by a visit to the Corpus President's Lodgings on Merton Street. They talk about their novels and share their views on modern crime fiction.



Harriet Tyce (English, 1991)

WH Auden had something to say about crime fiction. 'The interest in the thriller', he declared in his essay *The Guilty Vicarage*, 'is the ethical and eristic conflict between good and evil, between Us and Them. The interest in the study of a murderer is the observation, by the innocent many, of the sufferings of the guilty one. The interest in the detective story is the dialectic of innocence and guilt.' He explained his 'addiction' to detective fiction as rooted in a desire to return to an Edenic state of innocence, a form of escapism, where wrong is always set right, and the innocence of the reader is always asserted. 'The identification of phantasy is always an attempt to avoid one's own suffering: the identification of art is a compelled sharing in the suffering of another.'

My novel *Blood Orange* is a psychological thriller, which Auden would most likely not like. The first-person narration of a deeply unhappy woman does compel the reader to share in her suffering, although the ending is designed to give catharsis to this suffering. 'It is sometimes said that detective stories are read by respectable law-abiding citizens in order to gratify in phantasy the violent or murderous wishes they dare not, or are ashamed to, translate into action. This may be true for the reader of thrillers (which I rarely enjoy).'

Fortunately for me, and other authors of psychological thrillers, a lot of readers disagree with this sentiment. And overall, crime fiction offers a lot more than simple escapism, or the fulfilment of a fantasy of revenge (however satisfying both to read and to write those fantasies might be). In my view, some of the most vibrant, diverse literature being written today is to be found within the so-called genre, exploring the most difficult and complex areas of human society. From people-trafficking and slavery to domestic abuse and child murder, the worst of human behaviour is held under the spotlight, and as in life, easy answers are rarely to be found. The reader may come for the escapism and catharsis, but given the depth and breadth of subjects tackled within crime fiction, will leave with a greater understanding of the human condition, in all its shade of grey.

Lucy Atkins (English, 1987)

Three years ago I wandered into College to show my daughter the Pelican sundial. It was the end of summer and as we passed through the Porter's Lodge, we got chatting to a tall and friendly man, casually dressed in jeans and a t-shirt. When he introduced himself as 'Steve, the new College President', I assumed he was joking. In my mind, college Presidents were dour, hunched, silvery figures – Classicists, probably – and certainly never to be seen in a pair of Nikes. I'd been thinking about setting a novel in Oxford, and wondered if it might be interesting to have a College President as a character. Steve Cowley gamely agreed to be interviewed, and then he offered to show me round the President's Lodging.

It was 27 years since I'd last set foot in the ancient pink house on Merton Street and I had a vague, mildly traumatised memory of ticking clocks and squeaking shoes, fusty rooms crammed with polished furniture and grim oil paintings of men in ermine. But the house I toured that day had been transformed: the walls were soft white, the Jacobean floors polished, a beautiful abstract dominated the fireplace and the light streamed in, as if the windows had somehow been enlarged. I didn't see Steve again – no doubt he was running scared by then – but I did spend the next three years in his house.

Whilst there, I made some alterations of my own: I added a clever nanny, a mute child and a pregnant Danish wife; I moved the priest's hole up to a fictional attic, then moved the whole house to an imaginary alley, and created an entire fictional College for it. And then – perhaps biting the hand that had fed me – I turned our friendly, welcoming President into a Machiavellian monster. The result, *Magpie Lane*, was published in April this year. The same week every bookshop in Britain closed its doors.

At first, there was dismay: what would become of the novel I'd spent almost three years writing? But it soon became clear that one effect of lockdown was to be a massive surge in reading. You'd think we'd want cosy 'uplit', but no – it turns out that pandemic reading is dark. Sales of Camus have skyrocketed; and writers such as Stephen King, Dean Koontz or Peter May have all reaped the benefits

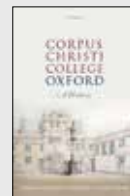
of having previously written 'pandemlit'. Above all, though, it is 'comfort' of crime and thrillers that people are craving the most.

A good thriller is a page turner, of course, and this has obvious distraction value. But I think the appeal goes deeper than this. The act of reading a suspense novel actually mirrors, in a strange way, the daily experience of a pandemic. Both put us in a state of fear, hope and cognitive uncertainty, where we are constantly predicting what's going to happen next. When we get new information – from the author, from the government – we recalibrate, and predict again. What's driving this, in both cases, is a search for resolution. When we get this in a novel's climatic scenes we also get a nice dopamine reward, and a sense of closure. Real life, of course, is rather messier.

Many writers I know are now planning lockdown novels, but a part of me wonders if I've already written one. I loved my time at Oxford, but my character, the disenfranchised nanny to the brutal College President, certainly does not, and so to her the fictional College is a nest of vipers, mired in the past, resisting change, hemmed in by ancient stone. The President's Lodging, a circle within a circle within a circle, becomes a claustrophobic prison, filled with tension and lies and sinister echoes from the past. It is, in short, an irresistible setting for a literary thriller. I hope Steve will forgive me but there's one simple lesson to be learned here: never show a writer round your house.

Merchandise

These products will be available again through our website www.ccc.ox.ac.uk/Merchandise ... once the College reopens.



Corpus Christi College – A History



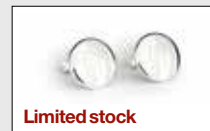
The Great Little College



An Oxford College At War



Whisky glass



Earrings



Mug



Stylus Pen